



Major Subcontractors Consortium sharpens its focus

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Area businesses gain more value in MSC collaboration with Lab in 2016

Joseph Sanchez, general manager of [Hacienda Home Centers, Inc.](#), secured the company's first contract with Los Alamos National Laboratory in 1998 through a local vendor agreement. Today, Hacienda is a major subcontractor for the Laboratory, supplying hardware and building materials. Sanchez says this relationship with Los Alamos has helped expand Hacienda's business across Northern New Mexico.

Sanchez also serves as the government contracts manager for Hacienda and has been actively involved with the LANL [Major Subcontractors Consortium](#) (MSC) for four years, attending meetings and serving on the executive committee for the past two years. His status as a board member with MSC was automatically granted due to the size of the contracts Hacienda held with LANL—a policy that has been in place since MSC was established in 2004.

New policies will foster growth

Recently, MSC decided to change its bylaws to encourage more engagement and foster new membership. Originally, any company could join the organization, but company representatives were prohibited from serving on the board unless they had a major subcontract with LANL. The shift in policy to allow any of the participating companies to have a seat on the board was approved earlier this year. In another policy change, the MSC board voted to hold separate executive meetings and informational sessions for the membership. Previously, the two meetings were combined.

"MSC's primary existence is to develop the economy in Northern New Mexico," says Sanchez, who now serves as board president. "We've initiated these recent changes to bring more value to our membership and, ultimately, to increase the grant pool funds so we can have a greater positive impact on our regional economy."

Investing in Northern New Mexico

The MSC grant pool is a major boost to the Northern New Mexico economy. "We've awarded 42 separate grants to 18 organizations, totaling more than \$528,000 during the past 10 years," says Jeffrey Lunsford, MSC administrator. "Combined with other

contributions that our members have made, we have collectively invested more than \$10 million in the community.”

For four years, Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS)—the company that manages the Laboratory—has matched MSC member donations to the grant pool. This year, LANS will match up to \$40,000 in contributions. Lunsford says this match is critical to the growth of the grant pool, and that the impact on businesses in the region cannot be overstated.

Laboratory Director Charlie McMillan meets with the LANL Major Subcontractors Consortium (MSC). MSC is comprised of businesses that hold a contract with LANL that is valued at \$5 million or more.

The grant pool is committed to supporting organizations that collaborate within their community to create jobs and strengthen the economy. A recent recipient, Picuris Pueblo, was awarded funds in 2014 and 2015 to revive its natural wood charcoal project, which will help manage forest restoration by responsibly recycling forest slash and biomass. The project will also create jobs for tribal members and increase revenue for the Pueblo.

More opportunities for members in 2016

This year, MSC will focus on three primary goals: growing the grant pool, creating networking and connection opportunities for its members, and reporting on issues that might impact the membership at large. The operational end of the meetings will be confined to the board and will allow the membership meetings to feature valuable content such as seminars, lectures, and workshops.

The new policies directly support MSC’s mission of investing in economic development programs and projects that help diversify the region’s economy. Collectively, major LANL subcontractors employ more than 2,000 Northern New Mexicans with an estimated annual payroll in excess of \$110 million. Maintaining those jobs and creating new ones—by helping membership grow and by increasing the grant pool—is ultimately the end goal.

“The main reason for all these changes is to bring more value to our members,” Sanchez says. “We also want to open membership to those who don’t hold major contracts, and foster an environment of collaboration.”

Because the MSC is a member-driven organization, membership carries dues to companies who do not hold a major contract (\$5 million or more) with LANL. However, the policy change that now allows any company to have a seat on the governing board promises to keep MSC a vibrant organization actively pursuing the betterment of its members and the regional economy at large.

Road map for the future

Looking ahead, MSC is refining its model to provide value to member companies located in other parts of the country. Similar communities that provide services to national laboratories or institutes face similar challenges, and Lunsford believes they could benefit from MSC’s new collaborative and informative structure.

“Although we’re very proud of the accomplishments to date, we know there is much more to do,” Lunsford says. “We’re focused on making even bigger contributions and having a much greater impact going forward.”

For more information, visit lanlmsc.org.

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